

Clans of Kalquor 13 Alien Haven

Chapter One

The woman who'd introduced herself to her shipmates as Jennifer Seng ran her palms along Dramok Ild's chiseled chest as he drowned her in a kiss. He clutched her honey-blond hair in a demanding manner that excited her. "Jennifer" had enjoyed intimacy with a few men, including aliens at the university she'd attended until recently, but never a Kalquorian.

His body, still fully clothed, was a revelation of curves and hollows. Kalquorians were naturally muscled. Jennifer's companion, slightly older than her twenty years, had obviously worked to add to his delicious physique, improving on what genetics had generously bestowed..

They'd had a couple bottles of kloq to start their tryst in her tiny sleeping quarters. They traveled on board a Kalquorian fleet shuttle, which was taking them to the planet Haven. The room was cramped from the massive bed Jennifer and Ild writhed on. She'd compensated for the tight space by ordering the window and ceiling vids to display the vast stretch of space the shuttle shot through. Satin blackness was dotted by sequin stars overhead and next to the bed they lounged upon.

Had she thought of them as *lounging* in their star-speckled retreat? No, they weren't doing anything so restful or serene. They were squirming and groping and clutching, rumpling the cover and sheets to a fine mess.

The handsome Kalquorian tasted of the warm ale they'd imbibed. The scent of his arousal, a sweetish aroma accented by the bite of spice, mingled excitingly with his flavor.

He lay half on her, his excitement hard against her thigh through their clothes. He was intent on removing barriers as he kissed her deeply and passionately. He tugged on the front of her blouse, parting the resealable seam to bare her to his eager touch.

Two days. It had taken her this long to get him where she'd wanted him from the moment she'd set eyes on him in the shuttle's main cabin. They were mere hours from docking at her port of exile. She was thrilled to have at last herded him where curiosity and pure lust could be satisfied.

He succeeded in getting her top open, and his hand was hot as he rubbed along her abdomen and ribs. He found her bra-clad breast and rubbed his thumb on the brazen nipple poking at the fabric.

Thank the prophets he acted as if he were in as much of a hurry to get to the good stuff as she. He didn't delay by undoing her bra. He simply shoved it up toward her throat, and his calloused fingers closed on bared voluptuous flesh. A flash of brilliant excitement shot straight to her pussy, and her wide-mouthed moan interrupted their kiss.

"Ancestors," he muttered, purple cat-pupil eyes staring at her. "You bear no resemblance to the fabled repressed Earther female."

She smirked. "I'm not only not repressed, I'm extremely vocal. As our earlier petting has forewarned you. I hope you like it loud."

His grin lit his bronze face. "Where you're concerned, I like it any way you'll give it to me. Especially since my parents are nowhere in the area."

An important point. Their transportation was an older shuttle, and the walls weren't soundproof. Ild's parent clan's quarters were next door to Jennifer. His room was on the opposite side of his adoring fathers and mother, collectively known as Clan Codab. Their

proximity on the small vessel and Jennifer's uncontrollably loud delight during sex were the reasons it had taken the couple so long to get a real chance at intimacy.

There was nothing like parental presence to dampen even the fieriest of youthful urges.

Ilid buried his face between Jennifer's ample breasts, groaning his approval. Her breath caught as he kissed his way to a nipple, then to the other. He'd admitted to little experience with women...none where Earthers or the rare Kalquorian females still in existence were concerned. Nonetheless, she discovered no reason to complain as his hot mouth licked and sucked and kissed her to heady rapture.

"Still too many clothes," she gasped. She pulled at his soft blue shirt, untucking it from the black trousers he filled out oh so well. She wanted to feel him naked against her.

"Ladies first," Ilid chuckled. He grabbed her wrists and pinned them over her head to thwart her eager attempts to unclothe him.

The hint of dominance sent wet warmth fleeing between her thighs. Dramoks were the breed acknowledged as Kalquor's natural leaders. During the two days they'd spent together, Jennifer had seen hints of command from Ilid on occasion, but not as often as the majority of Dramoks she'd encountered. The sudden control he exerted was a thrill.

He was intent on stripping her, but she sensed the constraint he placed on himself to do so. He concentrated on thoroughly enjoying all he revealed. She was delighted at how he meticulously unfastened her belt and slid it through the loops of her pants' waistband. He slowly peeled them down her legs. He licked his lips as he eyed her lacy panties, which matched the bra crumpled above her chest. He paused to inspect his conquest, and Jennifer basked in the satisfaction of her curvy figure. At least *that* hadn't been altered when she'd left behind her identity on Alpha Space Station. She'd have fought the Kalquorian Empire's spy contingent tooth and nail if they'd attempted to change one inch of her lush five-foot-six frame. The modifications to her hair, eyes, and face had been more than she could stand as it was, thank you very much.

Ilid stroked the skin he'd revealed, his expression of reverence shaking her. She'd been gazed at appreciatively, lustfully, and hungrily, but never had anyone appeared worshipful before. She wasn't sure anyone should be stared at in such a manner. Her particularly.

"Magnificent," he breathed and went for her panties.

They wetly peeled from her flexing pussy. He drew an admiring sniff. He grinned at her and tossed a glance at the ceiling. "Watch the sky."

"As an astronomy student, I watch it all the time. I'd rather watch you."

His tone took on the edge of a Dramok's natural command and repeated, "Watch the sky."

She huffed even as she obeyed instinctively. Dramoks had the ability to encourage compliance from the reluctant. Jennifer wasn't reluctant in the least when it came to sex with Ilid. She also wasn't known for submitting without a fight. Or at least an intense discussion.

As he kissed, licked, nipped, and caressed every inch of exposed flesh he could find, she found the will to surrender, if only for a few seconds. Each instant of contact roused her higher, and her excited noises grew loud as he worked his way lower. Her gyrations increased too. He'd descended halfway down her abdomen when she bucked hard enough for him to look up.

"Do I need to tie you up?"

A surge of exhilaration greeted his threat. Or maybe it was his hot yet steely gaze.

"How?" she smarted off, pretending there was no tremble in her voice. "Do you see any ropes floating around space?" She gestured at the ceiling.

"I suggest you stay still and take it or suffer the consequences." He was in full Dramok mode.

Jennifer blew a raspberry and snuggled deep into the bed, as if sinking in it might keep her immobilized. She wished they did have some rope. The idea of being helpless for Ilid's attentions was a stimulating notion.

He kissed her deeply to take any sting from his dominant demand. His muscled thighs squirmed between hers. She dared to shift so his crotch, deliciously engaged behind the trousers, rubbed where it felt most incredible.

"Watch the sky," he muttered, moving down.

No argument this time as he mouthed her throat, her breasts, her abdomen. She loved the vast depths of space, teasing its mysteries of far reaches in the distant twinkles of planets and stars. There was no better view than infinity as Ilid slid her legs up on his shoulders and bent to where her pulse pounded hardest.

His rough, raw silk tongue lapped. She unleashed a cry of rapture, singing to the galaxy her pleasure. Another lick and a ringing shout of her avid approval as bliss devoured her—

"...can't imagine even a fleet vessel mess crew thinking such a meal is worthy of being served..."

Jennifer gasped as Matara Diju's voice spoke outside her door. She shoved at Ilid. "Your parents!"

He came up, his lips shiny from her passion and scowled. "Damn!" he hissed so he couldn't be heard. "Why are they back from dinner so soon?"

"Apparently, the food wasn't very good." She could hear them chattering about under-tenderized ronka and pastry burnt at the edges as they entered their quarters. She eyed his obvious excitement, which hadn't eased despite the shock of nearly being overheard. She wondered if his discomfort was worse than her own ache of unfulfillment. "Damn. We were so close. Me especially."

He grimaced, adjusting himself. The shuttle was small, a nondescript little vessel. The craft had been utilized by the spy arm of Kalquor's fleet to escape unwanted attention as it transported those who needed to keep a low profile to safety.

In short, there was nowhere besides the sleeping quarters to escape to for a tryst. Since Jennifer's pussy had a direct connection to her vocal cords, even those "private spaces" were no real sanctuary from sensitive Kalquorian hearing. Particularly when it came to the ears of doting parents.

Her disappointment was tinged by curiosity. She wondered once more why Ilid and his parent clan warranted a secretive escort to Haven. Ilid had hinted he'd once been on a spyship crew before leaving the fleet. His former duty had allowed them to hitch a ride when their application to visit the mixed Earther-Kalquorian colony of Haven on business had been approved.

Jennifer strongly suspected there was more to the story than had been revealed. Ilid had little to say when it came to his recent past. The haunted expression he often wore and the way his parents' often nervous attention focused on him suggested he was running from someone or something.

Jennifer had her own issues and her own secrets to keep, however. Taking on another person's problems was beyond her current capacity. She liked Ilid, but she'd firmly counseled herself he was simply a distraction from her exile to what she feared was the most backward planet in the known galaxy.

He smiled at her ruefully as he helped her recover her clothes. “We’ll both be close to the town of Sunrise, smack in the middle of farms and ranchlands. I’m sure we can find a place to meet where we can both yell our heads off and not be heard.”

“Yay for Planet Farm Hell, where the deer and the ronka play. Just don’t expect me to go for a roll where we might find their blessings heaped.” Jennifer swept her hair loose from the blouse she’d put on, letting still-unfamiliar honeyed waves tumble to her shoulders.

Ilid chuckled. After their conversations, he was aware of her sight-unseen opinion of Haven. “I’ll make it a point to scout out the cleanest pastures.”

“Ha! Find us a nice room in a decent inn, or forget it.” She grinned and kissed his lush lips, making it a hearty smack. At least she could get away with that amount of noise. Ilid’s parents continued to audibly chatter their low opinions of the kitchen staff on the other side of the too-thin wall.

“Consider the earliest reservation at a local inn done.” Ilid sighed his regret as he closed her blouse, hiding her heavy breasts from his view.

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“In spite of the acoustics, I wish the trip had been longer. I enjoyed getting to know you,” Jennifer whispered to Ilid.

He darted a glance at his parent clan, who followed them a few feet behind in the aisle toward the exit hatch of the shuttle. The vessel had landed a couple minutes before. “Me too. I will see you again?”

Jennifer grinned, delighted at the prospect of encountering his familiar and classically handsome face again. And of seeing far more of him from head to toe. It was all she had to look forward to on the planet she’d never aspired to visit, much less spend an extended stay on. Three days of flight had barely scratched the surface of what promised to be an exciting fling where Ilid was concerned. She hadn’t come close to getting her fill of the compelling man.

“Remember, Clan Amgar’s farm is where I’ve been sentenced. I *will* be insulted if you don’t visit in a day or two,” she warned.

There was no trace of the reserve that sometimes gripped Ilid. He smiled broadly. “I’d never insult a woman such as you,” he swore, his Kalquorian accent slightly slurring the English he spoke for her benefit.

Perhaps his parent clan overheard them despite their quiet conversation. Kalquorian hearing was insanely sensitive. Maybe they’d have heard her and Ilid getting friendly even if the walls had been thicker. Over Ilid’s shoulder, she saw Matara Diju and her trio of male clanmates exchange smirks.

Far from the protective type for whom no woman would be good enough for her son, Diju had acted determined to play matchmaker between the young people. Every chance she’d gotten during the flight to Haven, a mixed Earther-Kalquorian community in Kalquorian Empire territory, Diju had pointed out Ilid’s best traits to Jennifer.

She might have been delighted to hear them having sex. Jennifer somehow kept her nose from wrinkling at the thought.

She had no designs on any long-term relationships, though Ilid was a compelling temptation to give her daydreams to the contrary. Twenty-three years old, he was perfect for sheer fun, especially when his pronounced serious streak disappeared.

She *would* see him again, she vowed. Though his problems were his own, she was determined to loosen him up. His laugh brightened their surroundings when it came, which was far too rare. He was a genuinely good guy.

Had she been in the market for a serious relationship, she admitted she would have judged Ilid a better than acceptable prospect. The Dramok breed of Kalquorian men had a habit of being bossy in her opinion. In defiance of his categorization, Ilid possessed an aura of vulnerability under the surface. She found it alluring. His parents were absolute darlings from what she could tell from their short acquaintance. That assessment included the watchful and brooding Nobek Gruthep, the protector of the clan. He and his clanmates doted on Ilid while obviously trying not to smother him.

In short, Ilid was wonderful, as was his family. Jennifer almost regretted her determination to play the field, but she'd eschewed dating Kalquorians until recently. She had a lot of catching up to do when it came to the species her elder sister Hope had committed to, in love and career. Fortunately...or unfortunately, depending on how things went...Ilid would possibly return to Kalquor in a month anyway.

An attendant who'd kept the sole five civilian passengers of the spacious shuttle comfortable during the trip, wearing the armored uniform of a Kalquorian fleet member, offered a slight bow as Jennifer and Ilid neared the hatch. "Welcome to Haven."

"Ee-i-ee-i-o," Jennifer muttered in sing-song.

"Matara?"

"An old Earther tune regarding the glamorous life on a farm. I can't wait to be among the cows and pigs."

Ilid chuckled. He'd heard her complaints when it came to being stuck on Haven, a mostly agricultural community. He'd been appropriately sympathetic while finding humor in her concerns about backwoods hayseeds and watching where she stepped when she went outdoors.

She was relieved not to be knocked backward by the smell of animal manure when she exited the hatch. Indeed, Haven's largest spaceport bore a remarkably respectable resemblance to such facilities she'd been to throughout the galaxy. It appeared as technologically modern as busier ports, if less hectic and noisy.

Despite the welcome absence of fertilizer aroma, Jennifer noted an appalling amount of flannel shirts, stained dungarees, and tall boots among the obvious fulltime residents who hurried past groups of uniformed ships' crews. Even the Kalquorians whom apparently called Haven home had adopted clothing reflecting an Earther influence. Yeehaw, she thought, her mood dipping. Two flavors of hayseeds.

She slowly descended the ramp to the ridged flooring, which offered stable, nonslip footing. Feeling Ilid close behind, she said, "It's quieter than most spaceports. Fewer ships."

"Anti-virus protocols have shut out a lot of commerce, I'd guess," he ventured, also gazing at their surroundings. His expression had taken on the nervously watchful cast she'd caught glimpses of during the trip.

Nobek Gruthep, a scarred but likable member of Kalquor's warrior caste sporting an ass-long graying braid, placed a hand on Ilid's shoulder. "Their security watches carefully for Darks, too. There have been no instances of suspicion our enemy has gained a presence on Haven."

Ilid visibly drew a deep breath. Another nervous glance at his surroundings, and he relaxed enough to smile at Jennifer. "Where is this Clan Amgar supposedly responsible for rehabilitating you, Miss Behavior?"

Jennifer blew a raspberry at him but laughed. As far as Ilid and anyone who asked knew, she'd run a bit wild in the now Dark-overrun Galactic Council, where she'd attended university until a few weeks prior. According to her cover story, she hadn't gotten in the sort of trouble to land her in a detention facility...thanks to her father's high-ranking position in the government...but it had been decided she should cool her heels on Haven while she learned to stay out of mischief.

In response to this tale, Ilid had given her the pun nickname of "Miss Behavior." His mother had been quick to defend Jennifer. She vigorously protested a young person's right to make mistakes, especially in the current climate of war and viral pandemics. Jennifer had merely laughed at Ilid's gentle teasing. She could take a joke, and he was as non-malicious as a person could be.

In response to his question about her guardians, Jennifer glanced at the few people rushing past. "I have no idea what they look like. Their Matara is an Earther and...oh, that might be them."

An attractive blond woman, flanked by two Kalquorian men, was hurrying along the walkway in the middle of the docked vessels. The blonde waved at Jennifer, smiling a welcome.

"Nobek and Imdiko. There's no Dramok," Ilid's father Jadel said in an undertone, probably to his clanmates.

"It's nice three of the four came to meet her on a regular workday." Diyu stepped forward to stand next to Jennifer. The muscled but plump Kalquorian woman waited expectantly, making it clear she regarded herself responsible for the younger woman until her rightful caregivers arrived.

The oncoming trio eyed Ilid and his parent clan warily, but their expressions remained pleasant. Jennifer decided it was up to her to head off any concerns.

"Hi!" she called. "Clan Amgar?"

"Here we are, Jennifer." The Earther woman was extremely slender, the sort of leanness that spoke of hard work rather than lack of nourishment. When she shook Jennifer's hand, there was surprising strength in her grip. "Sorry we ran a bit late. I'm Sara."

"It was my fault we weren't prompt." The unfamiliar Nobek's gaze took in Clan Codab, each man in turn. "I'm Nobek Groteg, head of the Kalquorian branch of Haven's security. This is our Imdiko, Utber."

"It's good to meet you. Let me introduce my new friends. This is Dramok Ilid and his parents, Matara Diyu, Dramok Codab, Imdiko Jadel, and Nobek Gruthep." Jennifer glanced between the Nobeks. "Your names are similar, and you're both involved in law enforcement. I bet I'll get them mixed up. Don't smack the silly Earther when she calls you the wrong names."

The pair glanced at her and chuckled. Groteg visibly relaxed. "I'll let it pass this first time." His eyes twinkled.

She grinned, liking him on the spot despite his intimidating appearance. "You're the head of the planet's security? Isn't the area kind of...isolated for you to work from?"

"*Isolation* describes Haven's overall setup in a nutshell," Utber laughed. "The town of Sunrise is small, but it's mere kilometers from the seat of our government. The location has been deliberately kept rural for the safety of the planet's leaders."

"It's easier to keep tabs on those who show up to cause problems," Groteg agreed. "It appears to be an odd arrangement, but so far, it's worked for us." His attention turned to Clan Codab. "I understand your clan is interested in expanding your bakery business beyond Kalquor."

“Under our son’s management.” Diyu beamed at Ilid. “If we find Haven suitable, he’ll do an amazing job.”

Groteg, Gruthep, and Codab exchanged what Jennifer thought were overly meaningful glances. What had she missed?

“A bakery would be wonderful,” Sara said, her blue eyes brightening. Their corners creased pleasantly as her smile deepened. “The only one in Sunrise closed when the owner passed away several months ago. We have a coffee shop, but it isn’t the same. I understand the building and its equipment are for sale.”

“It sounds like an intriguing opportunity for Ilid.” Diyu beamed at the news.

“Let me give you the address. Had you planned to stay nearby during your visit?”

While the women put their heads together, the men, save Ilid, drew close to mutter. Ilid jerked his head to indicate Jennifer and he should retreat a couple feet distant so they could talk.

“Clan Amgar seems to be a good bunch. Are you okay? Nervous?” he asked.

She smirked. “I was told I’m not the first wayward youth they’ve worked to put on the straight and narrow. I don’t see what kind of trouble I could find on Planet Farm Hell anyway. Hey, have you ever heard of cow tipping? I bet you’d be great at it.” She eyed his muscular build, her grin widening.

“I don’t know what cow tipping is, but it sounds as if Miss Behavior is already up to no good.” He shook a finger, laughing as he pretended to reprimand her.

“Ilid, Clan Amgar needs to get Jennifer settled and return to their workday. We’ll have to say our goodbyes for now. We’ll see you again, Jennifer?” Diyu sounded hopeful.

Jennifer kept her gaze locked on Ilid. “I certainly plan on it.”

“If only to distract you from mayhem.” He dipped a traditional Kalquorian bow to her. “I look forward to hearing all about you toiling in the fields while seeking to keep your shoes clean. Until then, Matara Jennifer Seng.” He winked, his broad grin dispelling the formality.

Wistful loss swept through her as Ilid and his family said their goodbyes and walked away. For some reason, it bothered Charity “Jennifer Seng” Nath to see her would-be lover leave, unaware of her true identity.

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“Has it been difficult to respond to the name *Jennifer*?” Sara asked as Clan Amgar’s well-used but clean shuttle, piloted by Groteg, zipped over vast swaths of fields and woods.

“I’m getting used to it. I went under another name on Jedver, while I was at university. I’ve had to be someone else for a long time now.” Charity grew glummer by the second as she viewed a few buildings in the distance. No doubt it was the town Sunrise, which was closest to the spaceport and her hosts’ farm. The spaceport’s scatter of landing pads and buildings covered more land than the town did.

Maybe I’m not in the middle of nowhere, but I can see it from here.

“This has to be a shock to the system after the bustle of a university area and a crowded space station.” Imdiko Utber was what Charity thought of classically handsome, though in a way too boyish for his years.

“This is, uh, quite bucolic. Wide open spaces, plenty of room to run wild and free, huh?”

They must have picked up on her false brightness. The trio chuckled.

“Don’t worry. There are activities for young people to do besides yank weeds and feed chickens,” Sara assured her.

Playing 'dodge the cow shit,' for example. Charity had a habit of tossing such smart remarks around, especially when she was in a foul or depressed mood. However, Clan Amgar was doing her a favor by letting her hide at their home until the heat of being the daughter of the so-called traitor General Borey Nath cooled.

She shrugged. "You don't just farm, is my understanding. Besides Groteg being Haven's head of security, Imdiko Utber is chef to the Kalquorian governor, right?"

Utber smiled. "Which is why I can guarantee a nice meal tonight to properly welcome you to our home. How do steak, potatoes, salad, and apple pie sound?"

Her grin was genuine this time. "Like heaven. Sara, I was told you manage the farm. What does Dramok Amgar do?"

Their warmth toward her didn't diminish, but she detected a dampening of mood. Groteg's voice was quiet as he kept his attention on the shuttle controls. "Our Dramok passed eight years ago in a fire."

"Oh. I'm so sorry. I had no idea."

"It was a hero's death," Groteg said, pride mixing in the heaviness. "He saved our sons."

"While Groteg saved our daughter and nearly died doing so." Sara's gaze showed love as she regarded him. "My clanship to Amgar was short, but I count myself as lucky to have had the months we did."

"Let's talk about you, Jennifer. I hope you don't mind me getting in the habit of your assumed identity, rather than using your real name." Utber interjected smoothly.

"Not at all."

"Your role isn't exactly a compliment, is it? Are you all right playing the part of a troubled young woman?"

"It's a shame you're coming in under a supposed cloud of mischief. You're already dealing with the actual problem of radical Earthtiques wanting to interrogate you for their own ends." Sara's pretty face took on a determined cast Charity recognized. It was the look her elder sister Hope had worn years ago. She'd been hellbent to shelter Charity from a powerful man who'd wanted to force her into marriage and sexual slavery. It was the expression her aunt Ruth had taken on when the supposedly dead Charity had been outed as alive and well on Alpha Space Station.

It looks as if I found myself another mama bear. Charity was equal parts amused and dismayed.

"The cover story the fleet's spy division decided on is the best possible excuse for her being here. We're known for taking in youths who've encountered difficulties in society. Usually we foster Nobek teens, but few will question our having you move in." Groteg spoke in a steady tone. Charity thought she heard an underlying attitude of *this is how it is so deal with it*.

Very Nobek, in other words. She bet he kept his past problematic wards in line easily.

"It's only a part you have to act." Sara was doing her best to soften what she believed must be a blow to Charity's ego.

The younger woman had to laugh. "If you only knew how my family would respond to my situation. They'd tell you no acting is required on my part when it comes to youthful hijinks and bad attitude."

"Really?" Utber gazed at her, his disbelief tinged by growing concern as he tried to detect wickedness in her demeanor. Perhaps he was thinking of her potential influence on his children.

“Don’t worry. I tend to be less mouthy to those I’m unrelated to. Especially those who might decide I’m more bother than I’m worth. I have no interest in giving you a reason to send me to the barn to sleep.”

She earned chuckles, including from Groteg.

Sara said, “Children typically let their parents have the worst of their behavior. Our kids’ teachers go on and on about how well behaved they are, but when it comes time for homework and chores—”

“The daily beatings commence to get them in line.” Groteg shot a grin over his shoulder at Charity to show he was joking. She was startled how handsome a smile made his somewhat stark features.

“As for farm work, I don’t expect you to do much. Just enough to keep anyone from becoming suspicious,” Sara said. “I’m sure you have your studies to keep up on until you can return to school. I prefer you to focus on them as much as possible.”

“I don’t mind pulling my weight,” Charity was surprised to hear herself say. She found she meant it, however. Her instincts insisted these people, who were going out of their way to help a stranger, were the best sort.

“We can always use the help,” Utber sighed. “I don’t know how Sara does it, despite us having hired help. Groteg and I pitch in when our jobs allow.”

Charity was prompted to warn them. “Please understand, I don’t know the first thing when it comes to farming. Someone once gave me a spider plant as a gift. I was told it was low-maintenance and hard to kill. It lasted three months before my black thumb of death did it in.”

“We’ll find something nonlethal for you to demonstrate to visitors you’re helping us.” Sara glanced at the window vid as the shuttle began its descent. A very Earth-style two-story farmhouse featuring a wraparound porch came into view. “Here we are. Welcome to the farm of Clan Amgar, Jennifer.”